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AUTHOR Beachum-Bilby, Sheila; Seymour, Liz; Krajewski, Fran

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ABSTRACT

This document consists of the first two issues of a brief (usually 6-page) serial publication highlighting the Making After-School Count initiative, programs across the country wherein communities and schools cooperate to serve children after school hours. The June 1998 issue discusses a teleconference discussion with Vice President Al Gore to encourage school officials to participate in the program. Other articles describe the public/private partnerships that developed the Alliance Schools Initiative in Texas and the LA's BEST program in Los Angeles. The role of these programs in improving the academic performance of program participants and reducing risk behaviors by removing children from the streets is also discussed. The October 1998 issue discusses after-school programs in rural communities, provides a state-by-state chart of the percentage of school-age children with both parents working, and describes teenagers' responses to after-school programs, and a training program for community members to help establish or expand after-school and summer programs. (JPB)

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June 1998

Communities & schools working together

ng afterschool count

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spotlight

Cover story: Vice President Gore begins national debate on the need for quality after-school activities.

texas

Page 6: Parents help shape their children's future with a "Microsociety."

los angeles

Page 9: LA's BEST creates safe learning centers in tough neighborhoods.

CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION

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Teleconference

By Sheila Beachum-Bilby

From Chicago to San Francisco, groups involved in the *"Making After-School Count!"* teleconference have used the event to help meet the growing need for meaningful after-school activities.

In Chicago, the April 16 discussion with Vice President Al Gore helped win the support of school officials who had been unwilling to get involved. In San Francisco, the teleconference helped an existing coalition identify new partners and begin to assess community needs.

"This was a mechanism to bring people together and start the dialogue in earnest," said Greg Graham, a collaborative partners associate with the Chicago MOST program. "We have been talking for the past few years with the schools, trying to get a foot in the door to get them to understand what we're trying to do, that we're not trying to take from them. This was a big hurdle to get past and it really gives us hope."

Reading is part of LA's BEST program.

A broad-based coalition of parents, community groups, politicians, school officials, and church and business leaders is forming to tackle the problem,

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Want more?

Additional information about the 21st Century Community Schools project and the *Making After-School Count!* teleconference can be found on the Mott Foundation's Web site: **http://www.mott.org**.

Those interested in getting copies of the teleconference videotape or related materials can fill out the form included in this publication, or visit the Web site.

Those interested in joining a special discussion group on the project should visit the Mott After-School area of the Web site.

neighborhood by neighborhood, Graham said.

The San Francisco group agreed in its discussion after the teleconference that a primary need was providing assistance to the poorest schools in the area. As a result, the group is working on plans to develop grant-writing workshops and recruit volunteer grant writers.

"It gave us good ideas for additional partners, like law enforcement," said Jennifer Peck, a regional policy assistant for the U.S. Department of Education in San Francisco. "And an after-school literature project, a group that we weren't even aware of, is now on board."

The Chicago and San Francisco groups were among 548 nationwide to participate, via satellite, in the *"Making After-School Count!"* program. Another 800 schools in the Northwest participated in the event through a re-broadcast, and hundreds more have ordered video copies of the program to host future events.

The teleconference was sponsored by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, U.S. Department of Education and seven partner groups. The Foundation has pledged up to $55-million for technical assistance, training and evaluation to help communities develop quality programs over the next five years. Numerous youth organizations, education groups and other coalitions are partnering with Mott on the project, including a growing list of funders, such as the Soros Foundation, the DeWitt Wallace/Reader's Digest Fund and the Entertainment Industry Foundation.

Quality after-school programs will help get children off street corners and sidewalks and, just as importantly, give children and adolescents continued learning opportunities and enrichment.

In a unique public/private partnership, the Department of Education has proposed an expansion of federal funding for after-school through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program. Under a proposal now before Congress, grant funds available to communities would increase from the current $40 million this fiscal year to $1 billion over 5 years, providing start-up funds to 4,000 communities.

Congress is expected to begin debate on the proposal shortly.

"Every community in the nation already has a huge sunken investment that can be used for the task," Gore said. If schools close down for the afternoon and

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they're vacant, he said, why not use them as centers of learning and community work all day long?

An estimated 24 million school-age children have working parents and 5 million of those children have no adult supervision after school. Studies show that youth are most likely to get involved in crime, to be perpetrators or victims of violence, to get pregnant or get someone pregnant, and to try alcohol, drugs or tobacco between the hours of 3 and 8 p.m.

Quality after-school programs will help get children off street corners and sidewalks and, just as importantly, give children and adolescents continued learning opportunities and enrichment.

"We can give them a rich menu of possibilities," Gore said.

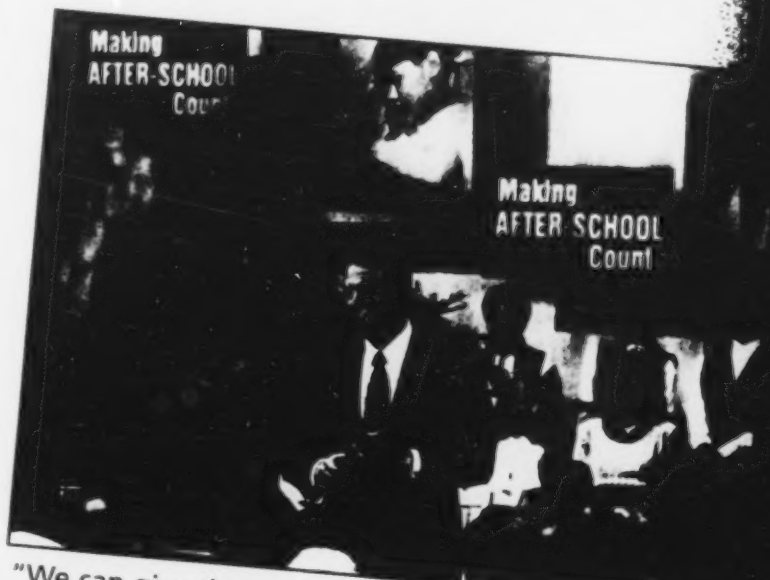
Over the long term, opening up schools will provide a number of benefits to communities — reductions in crime, higher test scores for students, and more productive men and women in the work force, Gore said.

The teleconference provided viewers with an opportunity to learn about different after-school models across the nation that work and how communities can develop initiatives that meet their own, local needs. Members of the studio audience described programs that provide youngsters with a wide variety of learning opportunities – from computers, drama, art and music, to reading and math tutoring, mentoring, business skills and athletics.

A brief video presentation showcased a Los Angeles program — LA's BEST, "Better Educated Students for Tomorrow" — that has helped youth make academic gains.

The program, a partnership between the city of Los Angeles and the schools, provides a wide range of activities for 5,000 children in 24 elementary schools, said Carla Sanger, president of LA's BEST.

Los Angeles schools involved in the program also have seen a reduction in crime, Sanger said.



"We can give them ... possibilities," Vice President Al Gore says.

Mott Foundation Support

The Mott Foundation has pledged to spend up to $55 million over the next five years to provide training and evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program and other after-school initiatives.

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Parental Support

Almost 80 percent of parents want their children to attend an after-school program, yet 70 percent of public elementary and middle schools do not offer such programs, recent surveys found.

Home Alone

An estimated 24 million school age children have working parents — including 5 million who get no adult supervision after-school.

"If they feel better about school, and they're involved in good activities, ... they feel better about themselves," said G.W. Gelven, an Independence, Missouri, principal.

Gelven said he has found that students who participate in after-school programs get better grades and have better school attendance.

And parents overwhelmingly say they want such programs, said Richard Riley, U.S. secretary of education.

Surveys reveal that 80 percent of American parents want their children to attend after-school programs, but 70 percent of elementary and middle schools don't offer such programs.

School boards and communities need to think differently about schools as places where children can learn and be kept safe after the traditional school day ends, said Barbara Wheeler, a school board member from Westmont, Illinois.

"Our schools are there for the use of our communities," she said.

Sister Judy Donovan, with the Interfaith Alliance Community Schools, said she has seen the impact of such

Sister Judy Donovan (left) and Mayor Dennis Archer participated in the discussion.

initiatives in 250 schools in southwest Texas, where the programs have helped to change relationships among families, community and schools.

"It's become a partnership, a collaboration," she said. "There is a broader base of people coming together to create

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programs. And most of all, kids themselves are really excited about learning."

Gore responded: "This is a chance to reconnect families and schools. It is true that all schools can operate better if there's involved parents."

During the hourlong program, Gore fielded questions and comments from callers around the country and a studio audience of about 75 students, parents, teachers, community leaders, youth organization volunteers and principals.

In New York City, a caller told the vice president, the local YMCA last year partnered with government, schools and businesses to launch a pilot program they hope to expand to 200 sites by next year.

The caller said businesses often want to help support programs because they recognize that in the future, they're going to need quality workers.

Student Robin Walker said she appreciated learning how to cook, sew and take care of animals at the New Orleans program she attends.

"We had a lot of fun in just learning, and it was a really good experience," Robin said.

Jarrell Williams, a New Orleans eighth-grader, has studied business, marketing and aerobic dance.

"It gives you better things to do than go home and watch TV after school," Jarrell told Gore.

Local leaders must help provide opportunities for staff to keep schools open after regular hours, said Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, who attended the teleconference.

"I think it's very important that the school system acts with all of our civic partners," he said.

Gore challenged parents to get involved in their children's schools, businesses to forge partnerships to build after-school programs and educators to help create quality learning experiences.

He praised the Mott Foundation's long commitment to community education, which began 60 years ago with a five-school experiment in Flint, Michigan, its hometown.

The teleconference was co-sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Collaboration for Youth, National Community Education Association, National PTA, National School Boards Association and Partnership for Family Involvement in Education.

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Request for Videotapes of the Teleconference

Name

Organization (if applicable)

Address

City

State ZIP

Phone

E-mail address

Please send me:

- ☐ The full version of the program (approximately 55 minutes).
- ☐ Highlights of the program (approximately 20 minutes).
- ☐ The reference materials developed for the teleconference.

Send to:
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1200 Mott Fdn. Building
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Public/Private Partnerships

The U.S. Department of Education hopes to expand its existing $40-million grant program to $200 million annually, or $1 billion over five years. Private funders, state and local governments also are pledging support.

Alliance Schools Initiative

By Liz Seymour

McALLEN, Texas — Six years ago, when staff members from Sam Houston Elementary School began visiting their students' homes to sip coffee and talk informally with parents, they assumed the discussions would be about academics.

Instead, they found that parents in this rural, impoverished town were most concerned about their children's safety. The parents said that until children felt safer in their own neighborhoods, their academic performances would never improve.

School and community leaders responded with more police, new lighting and, eventually, a new school building.

Parents also said they wanted the school to be a safe haven for their children — especially during the dangerous afternoon hours, after the regular school day ends. They told school officials they wanted their children to be better educated, to strive for higher education and to realize the importance of developing a career.

"The parents had real fears," said Letty Sanchez, who is Sam Houston's liaison to its parent community. "And they would wonder: 'Are they going to the right schools? Are they learning the right things?'"

The school responded by creating an after-school enrichment program that focuses on job training and career development — a "Microsociety," complete with its own bank, department store and government.

In this Lower Rio Grande Valley region, where unemployment stands at 21.3 percent and city leaders fight daily to keep neighborhoods clean of gangs and drug trafficking, parents fear for their children's futures, Sanchez said.

"Safety used to be at the top of my list," said Eusabia Hinoja, whose 9-year-old son attends Sam Houston. "We now have additional police officers, and we communicate with them."

At Sam Houston, a safe, quality after-school program is just one of the benefits of parental and community involvement. Reading scores, once in the 63rd percentile, now are at 90 for the school's fifth-graders,

Students at Sam Houston develop business plans for their "Microsociety."

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who have benefited the longest from parental involvement.

Teachers have witnessed other, less tangible changes. Student and parent self-esteem is on the rise. Seven- and 8-year-olds are showing an interest in a college education and career, even though many of their parents barely finished high school.

"A child feels very proud and motivated when they see parents in the schools, especially their parents," said Margarita Bravo, a parent volunteer.

The philosophy behind the school/parent partnership began with the Alliance Schools Initiative, a sweeping effort to reform public schools throughout Texas. The program, enacted by the Texas Legislature in 1991, provides grants to communities with large numbers of at-risk children to create a support system of parents, teachers, students and volunteers.

A nonprofit organization, the Valley Interfaith Group, is coordinating the effort at Sam Houston and 17 other Valley schools. Since 1992, the program has provided an estimated $835,000 in state grants to the schools. The money can be used for a broad range of items identified by parents and school officials, including improvements to the surrounding community.

At Sam Houston, for instance, lights were installed on all sides of the old school and alleys once littered with syringes, condoms and tires were cleaned and paved.

The parents also pressured their elected leaders in City Hall and on the school board to close the old, decrepit school building. The result was a new school, opened at the start of the 1996-97 school year in a more stable neighborhood.

The goal of the Alliance Schools Initiative is simple: Involve parents and other community members in the schools so intimately that they become stakeholders in the quality of education.

At least 10 to 12 parents are in Sam Houston classrooms each day, doing much more than reading stories and passing out snacks.

Parents, volunteers and staff provide hands-on learning experiences.

School Performance Improved

A Texas after-school program featuring strong parental involvement and an emphasis on academics boosted student achievement scores in 25 schools by 20 percent between 1993 and 1996.

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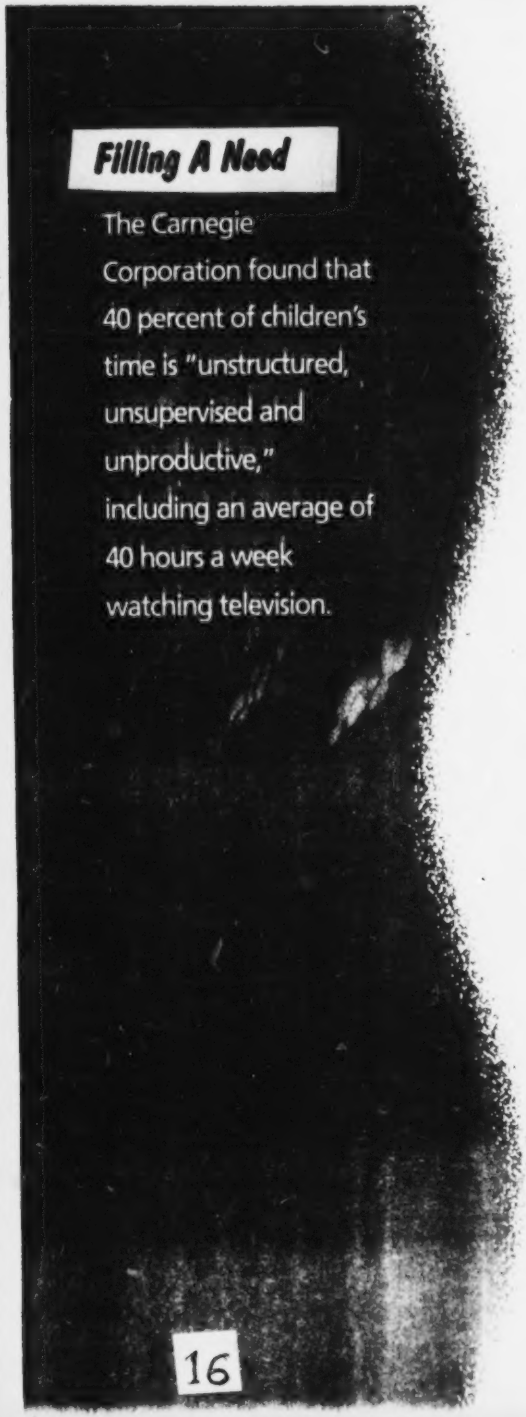

Filling A Need

The Carnegie Corporation found that 40 percent of children's time is "unstructured, unsupervised and unproductive," including an average of 40 hours a week watching television.

Laura Lopez teaches the math shortcuts she developed to help her son to the rest of his class.

"The more I'm involved in the classroom," Lopez said, "the more motivated to do well in school he is."

Other parents have taught history lessons on the Alamo and organized Cinco de Mayo holiday celebrations.

In all, they have helped create an after-school program that now serves almost half of the school's 520 students. The staff includes 18 of the school's teachers and a pool of parents and community volunteers.

In addition to tutoring and recreational opportunities, the program features a Microsociety.

All students enrolled in the after-school program must perform the duties of a "job" — processing bank withdrawals, stocking store inventory or writing resumes.

"It makes math and reading come to life in a very different way — by applying what they learn in the classroom through actual, real-life tasks," said Connie Maheshwari, the principal of Sam Houston.

They also learn problem-solving, communication, cooperation and other life skills, she said.

"I can get experience of how I'll be when I grow up and maybe I'll want to work at a bank," said Samantha Cruz, 10.

Corporate partnerships with Chase Bank and Target have helped the school with start-up costs. Corporate volunteers also visit the program to talk with students about career opportunities.

Robert Garza, a fifth-grader named "mayor" of Sam Houston's after-school program, got some political pointers on delivering a speech from McAllen's real mayor, Leo Montalvo.

"He told me: 'Stand up straight and don't be nervous,' " said Robert, 11.

In 1999, the Microsociety will expand to include a post office and newspaper.

"This teaches kids that education and jobs go hand in hand," Maheshwari said.

And in some cases, it teaches students to make choices about what they might not want to do when they grow up.

Ricardo Salinas, wearing a red T-shirt like the other Sam Houston Target store employees, said he's not interested in a career in retail.

"I want to make computer software," said Ricardo, 8.

When asked if the Microsociety works, Principal Maheshwari declines to cite statistics or the tenets of educational psychology.

Instead she tells this story: "One teacher, walking past the bank, stopped to chat with a student teller. 'I wish I had money like you,' the teacher said. The student replied: 'Well, you need to get a job.'"

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LA's BEST

By Liz Seymour

LOS ANGELES — In Joe Soto's classroom in inner-city Los Angeles, 14 second-graders are too engrossed to utter a word. They scrunch down in their chairs, their faces filled with concentration, creating intricate pen-and-ink designs. Some wear latex gloves so the ink doesn't smear on their 7- and 8-year-old fingers.

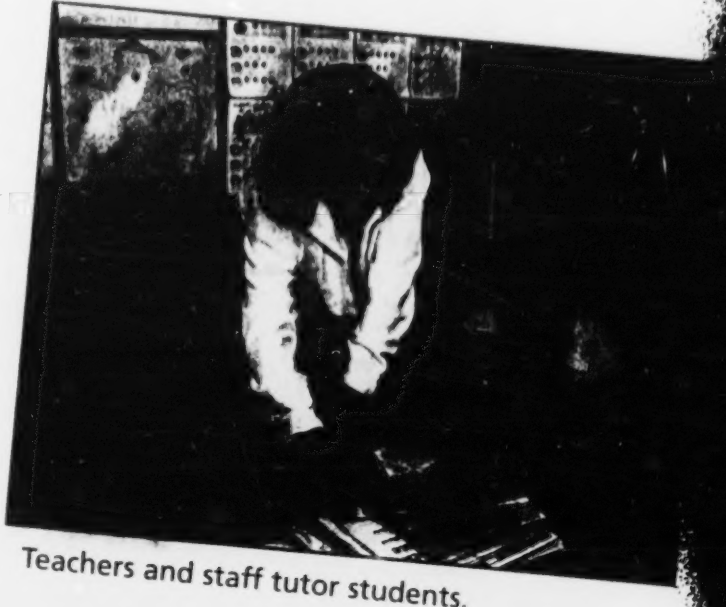
Soto has told them not to speak, explaining that noise will distract their steady hand and artistic eye. They seem to believe him. It's as if they are following the directions posted next to the blackboard: "No swearing. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself. Keep hands off other people's work. Respect all others."

Soto, 25, grew up in this neighborhood, one of the roughest on the south side of Los Angeles. When he was a youth, the few after-school programs available offered students little more than the opportunity to pull a stack of dusty board games out of a closet. Now this art teacher and community college student is working at one of the country's most respected after-school programs — "LA's BEST."

For two hours after the school day ends, this free enrichment program helps the most vulnerable students in the most vulnerable schools complete their homework, master basic and computer skills, and learn about art and music. LA's BEST — "Better Educated Students for Tomorrow" — offers field trips to orchestra concerts and sponsors science fairs. It sends students outside for drill team, soccer or volleyball and provides nutritious snacks every day.

"We want them to fall in love with their school," said Tammy S. Johnson, a spokeswoman for the program.

They do.



Teachers and staff tutor students.

In Los Angeles, a study of "LA's BEST" found that students who attended the after-school program made significant academic gains, felt safer and liked school more. Crime dropped more than 60 percent at schools partiopating in the program.

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More Than Baby-Sitting

A recent survey found 56 percent of American parents believe children are left alone too much after school. Parents want more than baby-sitting. Overwhelming numbers of those surveyed said their children would benefit from computer classes, art, music and community.

"There are kids on Friday who don't want to leave," said Coco Mendoza, site coordinator of the program at Canoga Park Elementary School in San Fernando Valley. "They say, 'Why aren't you open Saturday?'"

To the estimated 5,000 students enrolled, LA's BEST has made school a haven, where they can feel safe and nurtured long after the final school bell rings.

Teachers, parents and school officials said they are impressed with the turnaround they have seen in many of the students who attend the program.

But the strongest evidence that LA's BEST is working is found in a 1995 study by the UCLA Center for Study of Evaluation.

The three-year study found that students in LA's BEST improved their grades significantly in math, science, social studies, reading and composition when compared with a group of students in the same schools who did not attend the enrichment program. Students in LA's BEST also had a greater enthusiasm for school and were developing interests in meaningful extracurricular activities, such as art and drama.

In addition, the Los Angeles Unified School District found that the incidence of crime dropped 64 percent in the 19 schools with the longest-running programs.

Tom Bradley, a former mayor of Los Angeles, started LA's BEST a decade ago. At that time, officials estimated that 100,000 children under 10 were getting out of school with nowhere to go and nothing to do before their parents' workday ended. Bradley began the program to provide a safe, supervised environment for youth most at risk of doing drugs, joining gangs or becoming victims of violence.

The program's $3.5-million annual budget is financed by city, state and private dollars. Each of the 24 schools now involved in the program receives $125,000 a year to pay the teachers, college and high school students who staff the program. Corporate sponsors pay for monthly field trips to such places as the California Museum of Science & Industry and Six Flags Magic Mountain amusement park.

While the enrichment program operates only in Los Angeles schools, it is a nonprofit organization independent of the school system.

In order to reach the most vulnerable students, the program is available only to schools meeting certain criteria, including:

- no other after-school program is available at the school;
- overall academic performance by students at the school is poor, as demonstrated by achievement tests; and
- the neighborhood surrounding the school is unsafe.

Manchester Elementary School is a typical example of the problems plaguing many L.A. schools. Inexperienced teachers, high staff turnover and deteriorating facilities make it increasingly difficult for children to

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focus on learning. The 70-year-old school is in such decay that plaster is peeling off the walls from a leaky roof.

Outside Manchester's walls, in the renowned area of south central Los Angeles, crime is part of everyday life. Until a recent police raid, the house next door to the school was the home of a prostitution ring. There are so many gangs in the area — 32 within a four-mile radius — that school officials were forced to require boys and girls to wear uniforms: white shirts and blue bottoms.

Students often arrive at school hungry. Many have parents who can't read or write.

"When they post the student honor roll and half the kids on it are (LA's BEST) kids — that's the big payback," said Ed Gonzalez, a third-grade teacher at Manchester.

LA's BEST has been successful because the program's curriculum focus is on learning, teachers said.

That means no "Surf the Web" scavenger hunt, no computer games, no art project and no drill team practice — until all of a student's homework is done and checked by a teacher. Parents also must review homework assignments with their children at night.

"It teaches me how to do my homework, and how to be responsible about my homework," said 10-year-old Cruz Vasquez, a student enrolled in LA's BEST at Manchester.

The math tutoring provided by the program is particularly useful, Cruz said.

"That helps me a lot because I'm not usually good at geometry," she said.

The strict homework rule is enforced so students can feel successful, said Johnson, the spokeswoman for LA's BEST. And a ratio of no more than 14 students for every one teacher means on-the-spot tutoring is always available.

With an enrollment of 1,700 students, Manchester has been forced to operate on a year-round schedule in a neighborhood where few parents can afford child care. And even if they could, their children would not be exposed to the riches offered by LA's BEST.

"Before, we used to have a baby-sitter and all he'd do is watch TV," Hung Nguyen said of his 11-year-old son, Bryant, a student at Canoga Park Elementary School in the San Fernando Valley.

Wally Valentine, a single father struggling to raise his 10-year-old daughter, Connie, in a Canoga Park housing project, recently sent her to live with her mother in

Youth find a safe haven at LA's BEST.

Kids At Risk

After school hours are the most dangerous. The national rate of juvenile crime triples, and youth are more likely to smoke, drink, do drugs and engage in sexual activities.

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1200 Mott Foundation
Building, Flint, MI 48502-1851

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Fax: (810) 766-1753

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photography
pages 3, 4 – George Waldman, Detroit
pages 6, 7 – Alan Pogue, Austin, Texas
pages 1, 9, 11 – Maury Phillips, Los Angeles

another neighborhood. Without the support of LA's BEST, Connie fared poorly at her new elementary school and asked to return to Canoga Park.

"It's better here because we get all the help we want," Connie said.

"She came back and her grades went up," Valentine said. "Being a single parent makes it difficult. This gives her something to do that's really good."

The Canoga Park program has 200 participants and another 165 waiting for openings.

In fact, the one complaint heard about LA's BEST is that the program is not big enough to meet the demand.

With the program running in only 24 schools, program officials are still far from their goal of offering the service in every one of the 150 eligible schools.

But there is much reason to hope that the program will continue to grow.

A decade after it began, LA's BEST has an active alumni group and is increasingly cited around the country as a model. It was recently featured on a nationwide teleconference on the need for after-school programs led by Vice President Al Gore.

But the real reasons that program officials never give up hope are the success stories of the youths they have come to know.

Andy Rizo, a 16-year-old high school student, teaches at the enrichment program he once attended and insists he's not a role model.

But site coordinator Mendoza disagrees.

Andy grew up in a family marred by alcoholism and gang activity, and it showed during his early enrollment at LA's BEST. His behavior was so intolerable that Mendoza said she almost kicked him out of the program several times.

Mendoza said she often feared that Andy would share the same fate of his troubled brother and parents.

"Now look at him," she said, grinning proudly.

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making afterschool count

spotlight

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training

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CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION

Afterschool Programs 'Make the Grade' in Rural Communities

By SHEILA BEACHUM BILBY

Twelve-year-old Joe Gibson didn't take long to negotiate a deal with his father about how he would spend the summer in their rural, Appalachian hometown of Albany, Kentucky.

Alan Gibson, Joe's father and editor of the weekly *Clinton County News*, wanted Joe to have some supervision and the opportunity to learn and experience something new. He also wanted his youngest son to take the hunter safety education course required of all young hunters in Kentucky.

Joe, who just started seventh grade, wanted to learn how to surf the Internet and swing a golf club.

At the Clinton County School District academic camp program, Joe was able to satisfy his father's wishes, and have a fun and educational summer.

"The classes were a lot of fun, and you learn a lot," Joe said of the program, which just completed its third summer. This fall, the program is expanding to the full school year with the help of a 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLC) grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Extending the hours of learning for students outside the boundaries of the traditional school day is the focus of the 21st Century CLC program, a joint public-private venture with a goal of expanding afterschool programs to 4,000 more schools over the next five years. The initiative, which is helping

continued on page 2

Joe (left) and Alan Gibson

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Want more?

Additional information about the 21st Century Community Schools project is available on the Mott Foundation's Web site at **http://www.mott.org**.

In addition, to join a special discussion group on the project, visit Mott After-School at the site.

Additional copies of this and other Mott publications can be obtained by calling our Publications Hot Line at (800) 645-1766. This publication can be downloaded from the Web site.

fund programs at 321 schools through 99 grants, is designed to support safe learning opportunities for children before and after school.

Working with the U.S. Department of Education, as well as more than 50 other funders and partners, the Mott Foundation has pledged $55 million over the next five years to provide training, technical assistance and evaluation support to afterschool programs.

In rural America, where the number of family farms is shrinking rapidly and growing numbers of parents are forced to work outside the home, the need for quality afterschool programs has never been greater: Rural states lead the nation in the percentage of school-age children who come from families where both parents or the single parent works outside the home. (See accompanying table, page 3.)

Youth at work in a summer class in Albany.

Supporting those families creates a growing challenge for rural communities. Geographic isolation and a lack of transportation and resources often hinder efforts to develop quality afterschool programs.

"There's isolation in these [rural] communities," said An Me Chung, associate director of the National Institute on Out of School Time based at Wellesley College in Wellesley, Massachusetts. "They don't have the access to mainstream society because of being 'out there' geographically — where you don't have access to resources."

But schools and community organizations are overcoming those hurdles and sharing their experiences with others through training sessions (see related article, page 8) and an on-line computer discussion group begun by the Mott Foundation.

"People are very dedicated, very compassionate, and they care a lot about what's going on in their community," said Chung, who has worked with rural schools across the nation.

That sense of community and caring is being demonstrated daily in Joe Gibson's hometown of Albany (population 2,000) in southern Kentucky near the Tennessee border, and in the windswept frontier town of Grafton (population 5,000) in the northeastern corner of North Dakota.

The residents of Albany and Grafton, both agricultural-based communities with some light industry getting a toehold in the local

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economies, are struggling with poverty. Three-quarters of the students in Clinton County, Kentucky, are eligible for free or reduced lunches, while a third of the students in Grafton are eligible.

Compounding the difficulties for these communities is that in Kentucky, 61.4 percent of school-age children live in homes in which both parents or the single parent works outside the home, while 83 percent of the children in North Dakota live in such homes — the second highest among all 50 states.

To help meet these challenges, the Clinton County School District in Kentucky and the North Valley Vo-Tech Center in Grafton, North Dakota, each received three-year federal CLC grants for afterschool initiatives.

Tim Armstrong is the energetic coordinator of the Kentucky project, which includes a summer academic camp and expands the high school's computer lab for interactive learning.

continued on page 5

Percentage of School-Age Children With Both or Only Parent(s) Working

Rank	State	Percentage
1	Iowa	83.2
2	North Dakota	83.0
3	South Dakota	79.4
4	Vermont	79.0
5	Nebraska	78.7
6	Wisconsin	77.6
7	Missouri	76.9
8	Kansas	76.4
9	Minnesota	76.1
10	Connecticut	75.4
11	Maryland	73.8
12	Montana	73.7
13	Wyoming	72.7
14	New Hampshire	72.6
15	Colorado	72.5
16	North Carolina	72.4
17	Maine	72.2
18	Hawaii	71.7
19	Indiana	71.6
20	Virginia	71.4
21	Nevada	70.0
22	Idaho	69.8
23	Arkansas	69.4
24	Rhode Island	69.3
25	Tennessee	68.9
26	South Carolina	68.1
27	Washington	67.5
28	Massachusetts	67.3
29	Oregon	67.3
30	Michigan	67.2
31	Georgia	66.9
32	Ohio	66.9
33	Illinois	66.6
34	Alabama	66.5
35	Florida	66.3
36	Mississippi	65.9
37	Utah	65.0
38	Oklahoma	64.7
39	New Jersey	64.7
40	Pennsylvania	64.6
41	Delaware	63.6
42	Alaska	63.4
43	Texas	62.9
44	Kentucky	61.4
45	Louisiana	61.3
46	District of Columbia	61.0
47	Arizona	60.1
48	New York	59.4
49	New Mexico	59.1
50	California	56.3
51	West Virginia	54.6

NATIONAL AVERAGE: 66%

Source: 24-Month Average April 1996 through March 1998, based on the CPS, Bureau of Labor Statistics

"I was sort of my own person until they had sign-up sheets for an art class afterschool. I became a very happy, outgoing person and am happy to this day spending time with these friends I made."

Michelle
from People/Time survey

Youth say afterschool [illegible]

Afterschool programs offering "cool" activities and opportunities to be with friends are worthwhile, an overwhelming majority of teens said in a recent on-line survey by *Teen People* magazine.

Almost 1,000 teenagers — most of them girls — responded to the poll by People/Time Inc. Seventy-seven percent said afterschool programs are worthwhile.

Almost 85 percent of the teens said their school offered some afterschool activities other than sports. More than two-thirds (68.4 percent) said they had participated in afterschool activities.

Of those who had participated, 56.6 percent said they would do so again. About a third said the activities were OK, but nothing special.

Two-thirds of the respondents said they would get "psyched" about participating in afterschool programs if a lot of their friends were involved or if there were really "cool" activities from which to choose.

Almost half would participate if it would help them get into college or if the instructors were really fun. More than a third said they would participate if the program taught them some useful skills or gave them an opportunity to help others.

When teens were asked which activities they would be most likely to sign up for, each of the following programs was selected by at least 40 percent: sports, beauty classes, photography, fashion design, dance lessons, music videography, drama, film making, volunteering/community services and cooking. ■

Is your community on the afterschool track? We want to hear what students, parents, educators and other stakeholders think. In as many words as it takes, tell us what unique afterschool opportunities you would like to see in your community. E-mail Talk2us@mott.org.

Teen People

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'Making the Grade'

continued from page 3

This summer some 100 students participated in soccer, golf, tennis and gymnastics, or opted for classes such as line dancing, clogging, singing or guitar. Youth interested in hunting took a state-required hunter education course, while others learned to negotiate the mysteries of the Internet or built their own telescope out of parts purchased at the local hardware store. Students interested in self-improvement enrolled in a communications class, which helped them learn how to speak effectively and hone interpersonal skills.

"In the past, they extended school basically for just those students who were having difficulty in a particular subject matter," Armstrong said. "To be honest, students would not stay. So we decided to turn it around, make it voluntary and make it fun."

Instead of rote memorization, students learned to apply math to the real world. Through this approach, for example, students stepped outside the traditional classroom to calculate the area of the school parking lot.

To combat problems caused by isolation, distance and a lack of staff expertise available in larger communities, the project uses a distance learning lab to provide rural students with some of the same opportunities available to students in urban areas. High school students learn Spanish after school from a teacher in another district 90 miles away. And students in special interest clubs take "electronic" field trips.

"It's a positive way to spend their time," said Paula Little, a member of the program's advisory council. "If they're doing something that has a constructive outcome, then they're not going to be doing something that would get them in trouble."

With the CLC grant, the Clinton County district will continue the summer academic camp, but expand into before- and afterschool and weekend programming. Two of the programs that will be expanded are a program called "Fast-track Action Reading," based on phonics, and "Clinton Reads," where volunteer high school students tutor elementary children in reading comprehension during the regular school day.

Later, Armstrong said, he hopes to add innovative science and social studies programs, including things like ecology and the history of Clinton County.

Reaction to the project from the community has been positive, Little said. Parents are getting more involved and expressing their appreciation for the project; the local newspaper has given it front-page coverage; and more than 50 local partners are participating in the grant, including community organizations, businesses and government.

Armstrong's goal is for the Community Learning Center to become a true center of the community — where residents can find an array of services.

Although the two rural communities share many characteristics, the new program in Grafton, North Dakota, does not share the Kentucky program's track record.

Until now, there were few activities

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"We have an afterschool program called 'Forum.' We bond and do things like camping and going on trips. Forum is a great program. More schools should have it."

Ruthy
from People/Time survey

The program in Kentucky includes a computer lab.

"I know many of my friends who have no one home and they are bored, but they can stay afterschool to do an activity or a sport."

Teenager
from People/Time survey

available in Grafton. The only summer activities, for instance, were a library program or the more traditional summer school sessions — and those were available only to high school students who could afford to pay and the children of migrant workers.

"There's a belief that because we're a rural area we don't have the troubles of the big city. We do. Part of the answer to that is to have our youth involved in positive activities," said Liz Daby, director of the North Valley Vo-Tech Center, which draws students from six school districts.

"We're looking at the kinds of things that are successful and want to make those same kind of programs available before and after school."

They are designing their community learning center initiative on a framework of four "F's."

1. "Foundation" is the academic component — making sure students have the basic skills and the educational foundation they need. Staff will work with teachers to identify children who may benefit from one-on-one tutoring or using computer tutorials. The high school library has a computer lab, and Daby is working to install similar labs in the middle school and vocational and technology center for use before, during and after school. Community volunteers will be recruited to keep the lab open after hours to students, parents and other members of the community.

2. "Fitness" includes physical health and wellness. The community has a local fitness center, but it's closed to those who can't pay. Project coordinators hope to use this existing resource to offer exercise and weight-training classes or swimming for pre-schoolers through adults. They plan to recruit a dietitian to offer workshops on healthy eating, a substance abuse counselor to help individuals with chemical dependence and a medical professional to help address eating disorders.

3. "Future" focuses on assisting students and adults with career development. Students and their parents will be able to participate in mentoring programs, career counseling and guest lectures.

4. "Fun." With the elimination of elementary art classes in the regular school day, students have few opportunities to express their creativity. The schools are looking to provide some arts, music and theater exposure

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to students. Staff also plan to tap other local community resources such as an archery group, a curling club and a bowling alley to provide additional avenues for fun.

"There are resources, but they are not pulled together in such a way that gives the community access," Daby said. "One benefit to being a small community is that people do know each other pretty well and, hopefully, we'll be able to identify our resources and bring people together in an expedient manner."

Robert Bradshaw, the new principal of Grafton High School, believes that creating a successful community learning center is critical to the residents of his community. The project was strongly endorsed by a recent community task force on health, whose members included Bradshaw and representatives from business, government, education, law enforcement, mental health and health care.

"We looked at it as a chance to reduce at-risk student behaviors; a chance to reduce the time that students, especially under grade eight, are latchkey; and tying that to the whole concept of wellness — physical, mental and educational," said Bradshaw, a professional counselor.

He envisions many different resources coming together under the umbrella of the North Valley Community Learning Center.

"For our geographic area, the school is really the heart of the community, so we need to continually upgrade the number of programs we offer to parents, students and adults," he said.

Rick Dalton, president of the Foundation for Excellent Schools, a Vermont-based organization that works with communities to improve their schools, said there are more similarities between rural and urban schools than most people believe, especially socioeconomic problems. Poverty cuts across geographic lines. Students who live in poverty — rural or urban — have fewer opportunities, less exposure to new experiences and places, and tend to come more often from dysfunctional families.

Many of the CLC grantees have been surprised to discover that they have much to learn from each other — including urban and rural staff members who previously had little opportunity to meet and share ideas.

"We must bring community into the school and the school into the community if we truly are going to create opportunities and provide excellence for our young people," Dalton said. ■

"We need more things to keep us busy like afterschool gym or something. Art would be neat, or another chorus ensemble."

Bridgette
from People/Time survey

21st Century Community Learning Centers 1998 Grant Awards

Bellingrath Junior High School, Montgomery, Alabama. Funding: $599,704.

Huntsville City Schools, Huntsville, Alabama. Funding: $279,008.

Mobile County Public Schools, Mobile, Alabama. Funding: $505,174.

Little Rock School District, Little Rock, Arkansas. Funding: $380,401.

Alhambra Elementary School District 69, Phoenix, Arizona. Funding: $348,246.

Amphitheater Public Schools, Tucson, Arizona. Funding: $258,864.

Coolidge Unified School District #21, Coolidge, Arizona. Funding: $159,241.

Red Mesa Unified School District 27, Teec Nos Pos, Arizona. Funding: $495,795.

Santa Cruz Valley Unified District #35, Rio Rico, Arizona. Funding: $185,887.

Tucson Unified School District, Tucson, Arizona. Funding: $316,219.

Alum Rock Union Elementary School, San Jose, California. Funding: $239,116.

Desert Sands Unified School District, La Quinta, California. Funding: $196,438.

Emery Unified School District, Emeryville, California. Funding: $100,379.

Golden Plains Unified School District, San Joaquin, California. Funding: $253,613.

Hayward Unified School District, Hayward, California. Funding: $347,673.

Lake County Office of Education, Upper Lake, California. Funding: $286,818.

Modesto City Schools, Modesto, California. Funding: $342,444.

Oakland Charter Academy, Oakland, California. Funding: $170,381.

Oakland Unified School District, Oakland, California. Funding: $310,000.

Ontario-Montclair School District, Ontario, California. Funding: $117,000.

San Francisco Unified School District, San Francisco, California. Funding: $785,859.

Santa Ana Unified School District, Santa Ana, California. Funding: $600,000.

Schools and Communities Go Back to Class

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This fall, scores of communities and schools nationwide will embark on a journey of discovery as they work together to expand the traditional boundaries of learning for children and families in the 21st century. In preparation, recipients of federal and foundation grants have begun training and networking with others to help establish or expand before, afterschool and summer programs.*

BY FRAN KRAJEWSKI

For three days this summer in Washington, D.C., 370 teachers, administrators, parents and community leaders discussed their vision for the 21st century: creating afterschool programs where children and parents feel comfortable and challenged.

They spoke of forming new partnerships and tapping new resources, traded tips and ideas, and asked for help with everything from finding space to training staff. Energized, they returned to their schools to begin the difficult but exciting job of keeping kids engaged after the school bell rings.

"This is something really new for us," said Dennis Gaspar, director of federal programs in Todd County School District, which covers the nearly 1,500-square-mile Rosebud Sioux Reservation around Mission, South Dakota.

"This is an adventure; something we've been wanting to do for several years but haven't ever been able to put in place. So it was good to listen to others and hear about some of their successes and failures — things that work and don't work."

The D.C. gathering, known as the Summer Institute, formally kicked off the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLC) program, a U.S. Department of Education initiative proposed to reach 4,000 schools nationally over the next five years. Integral to the success and sustainability of the program is its training component, which is

Members of the CLC Training Task Force meet in Flint for planning.

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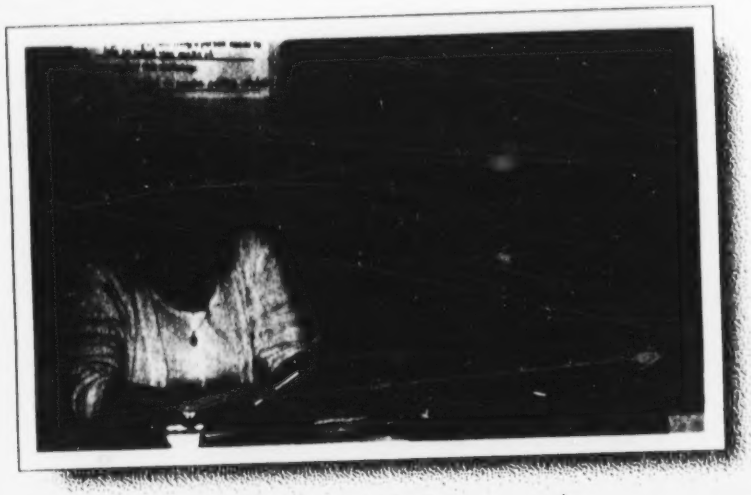

Carla Sanger (left) and Sheri J DeBoe are on the CLC Training Task Force.

being developed and led by a task force of successful practitioners and trainers working with the Flint, Michigan-based National Center for Community Education (NCCE), itself a training center established in the early 1960s to advance community education nationally.

The idea of putting together a task force to head up the initiative was hatched during a two-day, NCCE-sponsored conference held in March, where 43 trainers from various community-school partnership networks across the country came together to talk about the training needed to advance and grow afterschool programming, according to Marianne Kugler, a Mott Foundation program officer and head of its 21st Century CLC team. The Foundation is funding the training as part of its five-year, $55-million commitment to afterschool programs.

The group agreed it was critical that the CLC Training Task Force represent a wide array of programs, stakeholders and geographic areas. At the end of the conference, NCCE invited those present to apply to participate in the task force. A committee of Mott and NCCE staff subsequently reviewed the applicants, naming 13 members and four resource people.

"I am thrilled with the wide range of beliefs and values, community-school networks and organizations represented on the task force," Kugler said. "It is truly the kind of group we dreamed of having when we started. Its expertise and efforts really add to the work of NCCE in a wonderful way."

The task force began meeting in April to develop the training plan and has met regularly since then to fine-tune each phase. This marks the first time in the developing community/school field that the recipients of the training will benefit from a collaboration of trainers from all the major networks in the field.

The four phases are: the Summer Institute, regional training sessions in October and March, networking among grantees to help them learn from each other, and mini-grants to help cover the cost of individual program training needs.

The Summer Institute provided participants with sessions on critical implementation issues such as hiring and training staff, managing a center, using volunteers and technology, collaborating with community partners, and developing academic support.

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21st Century Community Learning Centers 1998 Grant Awards

Sausalito School District, Sausalito, California, Funding: $[illegible]

Denver School District #1, Denver, Colorado, Funding: $[illegible]

Danbury Board of Education, Danbury, Connecticut, Funding: $[illegible]

Hartford Public Schools, Hartford, Connecticut, Funding: $[illegible]

Waterbury School District, Waterbury, Connecticut, Funding: $[illegible]

Duval County Public Schools, Jacksonville, Florida, Funding: $900,000

Pinellas County School Board, Clearwater, Florida, Funding: $[illegible]

Miami-Dade County School Board, Miami, Florida, Funding: $[illegible]

Ben Hill County School System, Fitzgerald, Georgia, Funding: $[illegible]

Alton Community Unit School District #11, Alton, Illinois, Funding: $598,970

East St. Louis School District #189, East St. Louis, Illinois, Funding: $[illegible]

Lincoln Elementary School District #27, Lincoln, Illinois, Funding: $[illegible]

Prairie Hills Elementary School District #144, Markham, Illinois, Funding: $700,000

New Albany-Floyd County Consortium, New Albany, Indiana, Funding: $700,000

Marshalltown Community School, Marshalltown, Iowa, Funding: $[illegible]

Lawrence Unified School District #497, Lawrence, Kansas, Funding: $[illegible]

Clinton County School District, Albany, Kentucky, Funding: $[illegible]

Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative, Shelbyville, Kentucky, Funding: $600,000

Wayne County Board of Education, Monticello, Kentucky, Funding: $[illegible]

Monroe School Administrative District #1, Belfast, Maine, Funding: $[illegible]

Baltimore County Public Schools, Towson, Maryland, Funding: $[illegible]

Armada Area Schools, Armada, Michigan, Funding: $[illegible]

Benton Harbor Area Schools, Benton Harbor, Michigan, Funding: $[illegible]

21st Century Community Learning Centers 1998 Grant Awards

Grand Rapids Public Schools, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Funding: $[illegible]

Highland Park School District, Highland Park, Michigan; Funding: $[illegible]

St. Paul Public Schools Intermediate School District 623, St. Paul, Minnesota; Funding: $[illegible]

Humphreys County School District, Belzoni, Mississippi; Funding: $[illegible]

Jackson Public School District, Jackson, Mississippi; Funding: $[illegible]

Jefferson County School District, Fayette, Mississippi; Funding: $[illegible]

New Albany Public School District, New Albany, Mississippi; Funding: $[illegible]

Independence School District, Independence, Missouri; Funding: $[illegible]

Seneca R-7 School District, Seneca, Missouri; Funding: $[illegible]

St. Louis Public Schools, St. Louis, Missouri; Funding: $[illegible]

LEAP Academy Charter School, Camden, New Jersey; Funding: $[illegible]

Newark Public Schools, Newark, New Jersey; Funding: $[illegible]

Plainfield Board of Education, Plainfield, New Jersey; Funding: $[illegible]

Union City Board of Education, Union City, New Jersey; Funding: $[illegible]

Albuquerque Public Schools, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Funding: $[illegible]

Springer Municipal Schools, Springer, New Mexico; Funding: $[illegible]

Community School District 5, New York, New York; Funding: $[illegible]

Community School District 7, Bronx, New York; Funding: $[illegible]

Ithaca City School District, Ithaca, New York; Funding: $[illegible]

New York City Board of Education, New York, New York; Funding: $[illegible]

Watauga County Board of Education, Boone, North Carolina; Funding: $[illegible]

North Valley Vo-Tech Center, Grafton, North Dakota; Funding: $[illegible]

East Cleveland School District, East Cleveland, Ohio; Funding: $[illegible]

Port Clinton City Schools, Port Clinton, Ohio; Funding: $[illegible]

Cushing Public Schools, Cushing, Oklahoma; Funding: $[illegible]

Oklahoma City Public School District 89, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Funding: $[illegible]

Osage County Interlocal Cooperative, Pawhuska, Oklahoma; Funding: $[illegible]

Collaboration is a word that surfaces frequently in discussions about the CLC program. Learning to collaborate and build relationships among the schools, community organizations and businesses will be major issues addressed in future sessions.

"Our training is looking at building the capacity of communities to understand collaboration, local decisionmaking, shared leadership and community ownership," said Sheri J. DeBoe, director of youth initiatives for United Way of America in Alexandria, Virginia, and a member of the task force.

"We want to give them the tools to go back to their projects and find out: what they already have in their community; what their neighborhoods can bring to the process; how to prioritize each school's needs; and how to sustain their program beyond this three-year (grant) period."

Yong Zhao, assistant professor in the College of Education at Michigan State University, has been delighted with the training so far.

"The institute was very, very interesting in the sense of its mission of pulling all the grantees together as a community, which I haven't seen happening before," Zhao said.

"Often, a federal program that's giving money to different projects doesn't do it from a strategic, 'big picture' perspective. This time they seem to have a common mission, a common goal and a common strategy in mind. They seem to be trying to support and encourage the formation of a community."

Zhao is project director for the second largest CLC grant awarded, a $1,999,668 grant to the Armada Area Schools in Armada, Michigan, to create a "computer clubhouse" at 10 middle schools.

Lynda Haile, project director for the Nimitz Academy Community Learning Center in San Antonio, Texas, also enjoyed the opportunity to learn from other grantees.

"We need to share what's working and build on it rather than spend time starting over," said Haile, whose program will serve 779 at-risk middle school students. "That's the greatest benefit I see to all of this (training) — and what I look forward to in all other training. It's so great to have such an audience as this with whom we can brainstorm and work through problems."

The regional training sessions will be based on the needs expressed in surveys completed by the grantees at the Summer Institute. (See box, page 11.)

Training participants have been assigned to one of four geographical regions — West, West Central, East Central or East. Staff and community partners directly involved in the programs will attend three-day training sessions in Los Angeles; St. Louis; Memphis, Tennessee; or Orlando, Florida.

"This training will be for the project director, a school person and someone from a community organization collaborating with the program," said Pat Edwards, NCCE's associate executive director. "We want focused training, so we're being very specific about who comes to the regional sessions."

Carla Sanger, president/CEO of L.A.'s BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow), a promising afterschool enrichment program

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Identifying Training Needs

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers grantees have identified a number of training needs, from the complex challenge of building community coalitions to more basic problems such as how to transport students after hours.

These were among the most often cited:

- technology training, integration and management;
- building and coordinating a large coalition;
- integrating with schools;
- training staff, partners and volunteers;
- attracting and retaining youth and families;
- involving the business community;
- working with parents;
- evaluating programs; and
- capacity-building, including sustaining and funding programs.

built on an 11-year partnership between the city of Los Angeles and its schools, is another member of the task force. She emphasized the importance of developing programs that will meet the specific needs of communities.

"We don't want cookie-cutter models," she said. "We want programs to reflect neighborhoods, to reflect communities, to reflect families — and I would be very disturbed if the programs all looked alike."

That's a sentiment often echoed in discussions about afterschool programming. With centers located in a range of communities, from sprawling metropolitan areas to villages dotting sparsely populated rural regions to reservations that are home to Native Americans, the programs they offer are as diverse as the populations and areas they serve.

And with this diversity comes a number of challenges. One center making progress in spite of these challenges is on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in Todd County, South Dakota — the fourth poorest county in the country.

"Just the fact that we're going to be able to do afterschool snacks is going to have an impact on these kids," Gaspar said. "We're even exploring the possibility that on Fridays instead of doing snacks, we might need to do supper for them."

He said their program also will strive to

21st Century Community Learning Centers 1998 Grant Awards

Jackson County School District #6, Central Point, Oregon. Funding: $125,980.

Salem-Keizer Public Schools, Salem, Oregon. Funding: $200,000.

McCormick County School District 01, McCormick, South Carolina. Funding: $556,032.

Richland County School District One, Columbia, South Carolina. Funding: $864,574.

Spartanburg School District #3, Glendale, South Carolina. Funding: $889,747.

Todd County School District, Mission, South Dakota. Funding: $336,698.

Hamilton County Board of Education, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Funding: $650,177.

Memphis City Schools, Memphis, Tennessee. Funding: $1,274,648.

Crosbyton Consolidated Intermediate School District, Crosbyton, Texas. Funding: $48,300.

Houston Independent School District, Houston, Texas. Funding: $2,279,838.

Irving Independent School District, Irving, Texas. Funding: $403,026.

Martin's Mill Independent School District, Ben Wheeler, Texas. Funding: $148,217.

North East Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas. Funding: $200,000.

Rio Hondo Independent School District, Rio Hondo, Texas. Funding: $199,574.

Board of Education Ogden School District, Ogden, Utah. Funding: $300,000.

San Juan School District, Blanding, Utah. Funding: $943,362.

Barre City School District, Barre, Vermont. Funding: $200,000.

Olympic Educational Service District 114, Bremerton, Washington. Funding: $759,917.

Renton School District #403, Renton, Washington. Funding: $241,080.

Gilmer County Board of Education, Glenville, West Virginia. Funding: $298,800.

Monongalia County Schools, Morgantown, West Virginia. Funding: $600,000.

Ritchie County Board of Education, Harrisville, West Virginia. Funding: $145,843.

Kenosha Unified School District #1, Kenosha, Wisconsin. Funding: $475,440.

Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Funding: $1,446,222.

Racine Unified School District, Racine, Wisconsin. Funding: $125,000.

School District of Bayfield, Bayfield, Wisconsin. Funding: $262,800.

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include employability training for the Lakota tribe, which has an unemployment rate of nearly 80 percent; help parents to feel comfortable in the schools; and develop a sense of responsibility in terms of student outcomes.

So what is Gaspar looking for in the training?

"We want to make sure that the afterschool programs we set up and run are quality programs ... not just a way of extending the school day," he said. "We want to be sure that we're not only doing things that are important to learning, but doing them in a meaningful way. These programs need to be meaningful; otherwise, kids aren't going to show up."

That philosophy is reflected in one training exercise that task force members describe as critical to the success of the programs — visioning.

"We want to take all of the participants through a visioning exercise, which isn't something that people often have time to do," Sanger said.

"It's intended to make them really reflect and think about what they want their program to look like in the year 2003. If they can't figure out that point in the horizon where they want to be, then they can't begin to build strategically the kind of plans that are going to get them there."

In other words, she said, people need to think about all the possibilities there are for them to overcome the obstacles they face.

"To encourage that, we're going to really support the process of creative thinking, which we hope they will then take back to their own project and replicate," Sanger said. "That's what I think is exciting and bold about what we're doing in (this) method of training." ■

contact us @

1200 Mott Foundation Building, Flint, MI 48502-1851

Phone: (810) 238-5651
Fax: (810) 766-1753

Publications Hot Line:
(800) 645-1766 (U.S., Canada)

(414) 273-9643 (elsewhere)

Web site:
http://www.mott.org

E-mail:
infocenter@mott.org

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